

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 XMB-04 OPIC-06

LAB-04 SIL-01 AGR-10 DODE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 /104 W

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P 212320Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0000

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 2077

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, CS

SUBJECT: ODUBER PRESS CONFERENCE

1. IN WHAT MAY BE A RESUMPTION OF HIS WEEKLY PRESS

CONFERENCES, PRESIDENT ODUBER ON MAY 20 MET WITH THE PRESS
AND THE ENTIRE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WAS SUBSEQUENTLY
VIDEO-TAPED TO THE COUNTRY.

2. IN THE WIDE RANGING PRESS CONFERENCE ODUBER HIT HARD

AT THE EFFORTS OF THE OPPPOSITION PARTIES TO UNITE
AGAINST THE PLN AND THE GOVERNMENT. THE PRESIDENT ACCUSED
THEM OF HOLDING REPEATED "SEWING CIRCLES" TO DETERMINE
CANDIDATES BUT PAYING LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE KINDS OF

PROGRAMS THAT THEY MIGHT PROPOSE AS ALTERNATIVES. THE
PRESIDENT ALSO TOOK A SWIPE AT SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE
PLN STATING THAT MINISTERS OR VICE-MINISTERS WHO WISH TO
BE CANDIDATES FOR THE 1978 ELECTIONS SHOULD EITHER RESIGN
AND CAMPAIGN OR HOLD OFF THEIR CAMPAIGNS UNTIL A REASONABLE
TIME BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE UNITED BRANDS BRIBE EPISODE ODUBER

WAS QUOTED AS CHARACTERIZING IT AS "ONE MORE STUPIDITY OF
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A U.S. NEWSPAPERMAN."

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD ASKED FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO TO MAKE INQUIRIES IN THE U.S. THAT WOULD CLARIFY THE PRESUMED BRIBE OF UNITED IN COSTA RICA AND INDICATED THAT "UNTIL THIS IS CLARIFIED I WILL NOT BE SATISFIED."

4. ALSO WITH REGARD TO THE ALLEGED UNITED BRANDS BRIBE ODUBER REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE WANTED TO DETERMINE WHICH COMPANIES WERE INVOLVED IN THE "STRONG CAMPAIGN" TO UNDERMINE POPULAR FAITH IN COSTA RICA, HONDURAS, AND PANAMA. HE ADDED THAT THE "SCANDALOUS MANEUVERS" OF UNITED BRANDS, ONLY SERVED TO ACCELERATE THE COLLECTION OF A DOLLAR TAX OF BANANAS.
(SEE ALSO SAN JOSE 2064)

5. ODUBER COMMENTED ON THE BILL PRESENTED BY THE PLN FRACTION IN THE ASSEMBLY TO EXPROPRIATE UNITED'S UNCULTIVATED LANDS. HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THIS LAW WILL PERMIT THE UNDERTAKING OF A MORE "SOLID NEGOTIATION" FOR THE INSTALLATION OF MIXED ENTERPRISES ON THESE LANDS.

6. AFTER LISTING A SERIES OF CURRENT SOCIAL DISTURBANCES, ODUBER REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE DOUBTS THE GOOD FAITH OF THE PERPETRATORS AND NOTED THAT THE PROBLEMS COULD BE SOLVED MORE RAPIDLY AND EFFICIENTLY IF THEY ARE NOT EXPLOITED FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. HE SUGGESTED THAT THESE DISTURBANCES WERE STIMULATED BY BOTH THE EXTREME LEFT AND THE EXTREME RIGHT. HE ADDED THAT "WE MUST CONTINUE BEING ANTI-MILITARY, BUT WE MUST HAVE A MUCH STRONGER SECURITY SYSTEM IF WE ARE NOT TO FALL INTO ANARCHY." HE SAID THAT "MINI-GROUPS WITH ELECTORAL SUPPORT AND WITHOUT BEING REPRESENTED BY EVEN A SINGLE MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE (OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE SOCIALIST PARTY) ARE TRYING TO INTRODUCE VIOLENCE INTO THE COSTA RICAN POLITICAL PLAY.

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